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Sixtieth session

Official Records

First Committee
7th meeting
Friday, 7 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Choi ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: Before we start, I would like to share the good news that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, have received the Nobel Peace Prize for this year. I am sure that all members join me in congratulating them on receiving that prestigious award. I hope it will provide much-needed impetus to the cause of non-proliferation and disarmament.

This morning we have a total of 21 speakers on the list, including those delegations that were unable to speak yesterday. Therefore, I appeal to all delegations to abide by the agreed time limit and, if possible, even edit their statements so that we can conclude our general debate today and start the thematic discussions next Monday as planned. I appeal to members to abide by this work plan.

Agenda items 85 to 105 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. Adekanye (Nigeria): I am speaking on behalf of Ambassador Aminu Wali, who is currently chairing another committee. My delegation warmly congratulates you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau. I also wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Abe, for his introductory statement.

This year has been marked, in large part, by a string of failures in the field of disarmament and arms control: the failure of Member States to agree on an agenda for the Disarmament Commission; the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to produce a meaningful outcome; the lingering inability to agree to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; the perennial impasse in the Conference on Disarmament that prevents it from beginning substantive work; the continued failure by the required category of States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to enable it enter into force; and the ambivalence towards the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), among other failures. It is therefore hardly surprising that this discouraging trend played a major role in the failure to agree on a disarmament and non-proliferation section in the world summit outcome document (resolution 60/1).

The need to reverse this negative trend should be seen as one of the greatest challenges before the international community today, as the continued existence and proliferation of all types of weapons — conventional, as well as weapons of mass destruction — continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. States that possess such weapons — especially nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction — can no longer continue to pretend that their weapons pose no threat or a lesser threat to the global community.

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There is growing concern about the threat that the prevailing stalemate in multilateral disarmament negotiations poses to international peace and security. The time has come for Member States to stop looking at threats from nuclear or other types of weapons in terms of their narrowly defined self-interests. We all know that progress cannot be achieved on disarmament with such rigidly entrenched national viewpoints. It is common knowledge that the threats emanating from the excessive accumulation of weapons of mass destruction are harbingers of a spiraling arms race. We are witnessing this in the world today. We have reached a stage where we must balance the call for non-proliferation with the need for effective disarmament.

In the face of the general stalemate in the field of arms control and disarmament, my delegation believes that the time has come for all States to demonstrate the necessary political will to make progress in this area, especially in confronting the common challenge posed by the continued existence and proliferation of nuclear and other arms around the globe. I cannot fail to underscore the importance of confidence-building measures in assuaging the fears of States that feel threatened by other States' possession of weapons of mass destruction. Security guarantees firmly set out in binding documents remain, in our view, the best assurance that threatened States will not themselves acquire nuclear arms in self-defence. For its part, Nigeria will continue to abide by its commitments under various disarmament and arms control agreements to which it is a party. We will continue to work with other nations at the multilateral and other levels to promote disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects, with a view to achieving the overall objective of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

While taking note of the disappointing failures in the area of disarmament this year, we cannot fail to acknowledge that some modest progress has been made, including the adoption of a draft international agreement on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. We wish, however, to reiterate the Nigerian position that such an instrument should be considered as only a stopgap measure, for we believe that it is only through a legally binding international instrument that the transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors can be controlled and criminalized.

Similarly, the Nigerian delegation welcomes the initiative to convene the First Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico from 26 to 28 April 2005. We reaffirm our commitment to the Declaration adopted at that Conference and express the belief that it will enhance cooperation among treaty zones and strengthen the nuclear-weapon-free zone regime, thus contributing to the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation processes.

We also endorse the Final Declaration adopted at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held in New York two weeks ago. The increase in the number of signatures of the Treaty to 176, and of ratifications to 125, demonstrates the resolve of the wider international community to achieve universalization of the Treaty. We therefore call upon the remaining 11 States whose ratification is mandatory for the Treaty to enter into force to ratify it as soon as possible so that it can enter into force without further delay.

This year, my delegation will, on behalf of the African Group, once again sponsor three draft resolutions, entitled respectively "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa", "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes" and "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty". We have always enjoyed the support of all Member States, shown through their adoption of the three draft resolutions by consensus. It is the hope of the Nigerian delegation that the draft resolutions will be similarly adopted when presented at the current session. We look forward to such support from Member States.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, to join previous speakers in expressing to you, Sir, heartfelt congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. We believe that your experience as a seasoned diplomat and your country's resolute commitment to international peace and security will ensure the success of our deliberations. I also wish to congratulate your predecessor, who guided our work admirably during the fifty-ninth session.

Before turning to the matters before us, I should like to say that my country was horrified at the odious attack in Bali, which struck a friendly country so cruelly. I ask the delegation of Indonesia to accept the expression of our deep sympathy.

That bad news is tempered by the good news that the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to Mr. ElBaradei and to the International Atomic Energy Agency; we express to them our heartfelt congratulations.

As is well known, international peace and security have always — and particularly in recent years — been the chief concern in international life. The discussions in the First Committee demonstrate that clearly; many voices have already expressed the importance and gravity of this issue, on which the very survival of humanity depends. In fact, the representative of Indonesia has — on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which my country is a member — highlighted all our concerns. I associate myself with his statement, and I shall therefore limit myself to mentioning several problems of specific interest to my country, adding a general comment about some of the items on our agenda.

In the area of conventional weapons, Burkina Faso is striving to take an active part in subregional, African or international meetings. That attests to the importance we have always attached to the issue of international peace and security. Perhaps it is useful to recall that in recent years, the many conflicts shaking our subregion have focused a spotlight on the illicit trade in and circulation of small arms and light weapons, a grave phenomenon that has created enormous insecurity in our rural areas and cities, thus jeopardizing our development efforts.

That situation has led the Government of Burkina Faso to support the extension of the Bamako Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa, to invest in the quest for peace and to take an active part in activities and events organized within the framework of the United Nations. In that spirit, we cannot fail to welcome the progress made by the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We urge that efforts be redoubled with a view to the swift conclusion of such an instrument.

My country's fears are also great with regard to weapons of mass destruction. The mere mention of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is sufficient to evoke horror for us. That is why, together with other truly peace-loving nations, we call upon the international community to dedicate itself to preventing such catastrophes from ever happening again.

In the context of that hope, it is difficult to understand the procrastination and disputes that caused the impasse at the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). How can we fail to be concerned when, after the failure of that Conference, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), held only two weeks ago, has confirmed that the international treaties in this area are basically only springboards for certain States, serving to fulfil their ambitions and desires for domination? Furthermore, it is deplorable that the CTBT is still not in force nine years after its adoption. We therefore take this opportunity to encourage the 11 countries listed in Annex II of the CTBT to sign or ratify the Treaty, as appropriate, so that it can swiftly enter into force. We also need to resolve to put an end to the production of fissile materials and to strengthen people's awareness about disarmament by making nuclear-weapon-free zones viable and protecting them.

In addition, the current situation of disarmament mechanisms is far from satisfactory, because the Conference on Disarmament has not managed to reach consensus on an agenda, and the same is true for the Disarmament Commission, despite the efforts to do so. The most recent disappointment is the outcome document (resolution 60/1) adopted by the recent summit, which failed to include an explicit reference to disarmament in the text.

Nevertheless, we must not yield to resignation or pessimism; on the contrary, let us continue to hope. Indeed, it is inspired by such hope that the delegation of Burkina Faso approaches the sixtieth session. You can be assured, Mr. Chairman, of our forthright and genuine cooperation for the success of the mandate entrusted to you.

Mr. Williams Slate (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation joins previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on your well-deserved election and in congratulating the other members of the Bureau. You can count on my delegation's firm support as you carry out your work. I should also like to express to the delegation of Indonesia my sincere sentiments of grief and sympathy in connection with the victims of the recent terrorist

attack. Likewise, we express our feelings of sorrow to our Central American brethren, who are being hard hit by the floods caused by Hurricane Stan in that region.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the countries members of the Rio Group. However, I wish to address several important aspects of importance to Nicaragua.

As a small country, we are concerned that the outcome document (resolution 60/1) of the High-level Plenary Meeting made no mention of the issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. That omission, however, must not affect the conduct or the result of the First Committee's work towards the objective of general and complete disarmament.

My delegation is also concerned at the frustrating outcome of the Seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held in May this year. As the representative of Argentina said on behalf of the Rio Group, the lack of agreement on the adoption of a document that would have reflected existing challenges alerts us to the fact that work must still be carried out on the three pillars of the regime: disarmament, non-proliferation and the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Furthermore, in the multilateral sphere, we are concerned that the stagnation in the Conference on Disarmament continues, as in previous years, that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force and that the NPT has still not achieved universality because of the obstinate refusal of some States to join the Treaty — States that wish recognition as nuclear Powers.

As a founding party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Nicaragua congratulates the Government of Mexico on the successful holding of the First Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, in Tlatelolco, Mexico, from 26 to 28 April 2005. That Conference was a very important demonstration of humankind's determination to pursue efforts to bring about a safer world, free of nuclear weapons.

The problem of mines in Nicaragua is rooted in the civil war we suffered through during the 1980s. When our national demining programme began its work in the mid-1990s, it registered 145,902 mines in former war zones. Of these, roughly 80 per cent have now been deactivated.

As a party to the Ottawa Convention, Nicaragua has committed itself to completely eliminating all of these death-dealing devices throughout its national territory; but given problems of locating them — due to the mountainous terrain, lack of maps or imprecise maps and the moving of mines because of natural phenomena, including Hurricane Mitch in 1998 — the completion of the demining programme, which was supposed to have taken place in 2004, has had to be postponed to the end of 2006. The chief objective of the programme is to come up with practical and innovative solutions for detecting anti-personnel mines in rural areas, cleaning up mountainous or heavily vegetated areas and mechanically neutralizing military artifacts, thus protecting the lives of the sappers who are responsible for the demining process. In the context of this programme, we intend to destroy over 4,000 mines in 2005 in the Jinotega department alone.

Through the Programme for Demining Assistance in Central America (PADCA), the Organization of American States (OAS) is channeling and administering resources from donor communities to support Nicaragua's national humanitarian demining programme. Among the donors to the Nicaragua programme, whom we thank for their support, are Sweden, Norway, Canada, the European Union, the United States and the United Kingdom. Contributors of specialized personnel include Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, the United States, Guatemala, Venezuela and Chile, to whom we are also very grateful.

We expect soon, with the backing of the international community, to be able to declare Nicaragua a territory free of anti-personnel mines.

Nicaragua takes the view that disarmament can be achieved in a climate of confidence based upon mutual respect, a climate that can foster better relations based on justice, solidarity and cooperation. We also consider that regional and subregional arms control and disarmament agreements can promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts.

In Nicaragua, we are doing our utmost to prevent and combat the illicit trade in weapons and to move forward with arms control in general. It is our view that a build-up of such weapons poses a real threat to

our people and to national, regional and international security and is a destabilizing factor for countries.

During the 1980s, Nicaragua suffered severely the horrors and the aftermath of a war that took a toll of more than 50,000 lives. The lessons we learned showed us the way, as well as the need, to work to create national, regional and international consensus on these issues by exchanging the experience we have gained in such areas as the collection, destruction and transfer of weapons and in making current international policies more effective.

As an example of the leadership that Nicaragua has shown in regional initiatives to reduce arms unilaterally and voluntarily, 1,000 SAM-7 missiles were destroyed in 2004. This effort is part of a gradual reduction in missiles and arsenals and reflects our determination to take specific steps in Central America, seeking a reasonable balance of forces among the countries in the subregion. Our Government's commitment to gradually destroying these missiles remains immutable.

At the twenty-sixth meeting of the Central American Security Commission, held in June 2003, a Central American project to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons was adopted. Nicaragua was selected as the headquarters of the regional executive unit for that effort. The priority areas identified for implementing this project are: harmonizing legislation to control small arms and light weapons; enhancing national capability to control firearms; supporting the collection of weapons; and ensuring the destruction of weapons — all in order to prevent or reduce the abuse of small arms and light weapons and contribute to a culture of peace. The preparatory phase has contributed to progress in defining the problem and building better working relations with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), national Governments, non-governmental organizations and regional organizations.

In 2004, as coordinator of the project, Nicaragua spurred the implementation of training and technical assistance programmes, with the backing of Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and UNDP, to create multidisciplinary national commissions for the control of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and for export, import and trans-border controls for small arms and light weapons.

Moreover, at a meeting held in Managua on 30 and 31 August of this year, Central American ministers responsible for good governance and defence made progress in considering the matter of a code of conduct governing arms, munitions and explosives transfers and those of related materials, as an urgent element of progress towards a common arms transfer policy. A proposed code was introduced by Nicaragua, and we hope and expect it will be taken up at the thirtieth meeting of the Central American Security Commission, which will take place on 18 October in Managua. The meeting, among other things, will hear of strides made in our region in preventing and punishing illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

Through those regional actions, the member countries of the Central American Integration system have reaffirmed our commitment to pursuing and spearheading practical measures required to put an end to the use of and illegal trade in these weapons in our subregion.

Mr. Gatan (Philippines): I am making this statement on behalf of Ambassador Baja.

Mr. Chairman, the Philippines joins other delegations in congratulating you and the members of your Bureau on your well-deserved election. The Philippines pays heed to your appeal for the First Committee to conduct its business with an eye to a positive and constructive outcome. In this regard, you can count on the Philippine delegation's cooperation, including in the brevity of this statement.

The Philippines has noted the lamentation of a number of delegations that the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) failed to include a section on disarmament and non-proliferation. Their ventilation of disappointment should not, however, be construed as the absence of a mandate or as a diminished mandate for the General Assembly, through its First Committee, to discuss disarmament issues.

It must be borne in mind that the 2005 world summit was convened to review the implementation of the goals contained in the 2000 Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2). Although world leaders did not include a section on disarmament in their summit outcome document last month, this omission in no way cancels their disarmament goals contained in the 2000 Millennium Declaration.

Let me cite the five disarmament goals contained in the 2000 Millennium Declaration, which remain valid today and which should continue to guide our work during the current session. The world leaders resolved: first, to ensure the implementation by States parties of treaties in such areas as arms control and disarmament; secondly, to take concerted action against international terrorism and to accede as soon as possible to all relevant international conventions; thirdly, to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons; fourthly, to take concerted action to end illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons; and fifthly, to call on all States to consider acceding to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Those five goals do not exclude other options to advance disarmament, because the world leaders stated in the chapeau of the Millennium Declaration's section on peace, security and disarmament: "We will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, which has claimed more than 5 million lives in the past decade" *(resolution 55/2, para. 8)*.

In the light of that understanding, my delegation is in full accord with the views expressed by the President of the General Assembly who wrote to all delegations on 30 September:

> "The [world summit] document should not set a limit on our ambitions; rather it should be a beachhead from which we launch ourselves forward. There are some areas that the document does not address in detail, where many would — rightly — like to see progress during the sixtieth session. One such area is disarmament and non-proliferation, on which I encourage new and creative thinking in all appropriate forums".

Speaking of launching ourselves forward through new and creative thinking, the Philippines supports the new course of multilateral arms-control diplomacy spearheaded by Norway and six other countries from different regions of the world. Although this new initiative was not reflected in the World Summit Outcome, it nevertheless responds to the call of world leaders in their Millennium Declaration disarmament goals. We have to consider this Norwegian initiative because of the promise it holds in advancing our collective effort to carve a more peaceful world.

The failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission to generate substantive results in recent sessions is a reality we have to face. We should convert such failures to stepping stones leading to positive outcomes in their next rounds of activities. We should not relent in our resolve to achieve constructive results, for no man-made challenges are insurmountable.

We should also draw inspiration from the progress we have achieved in other fields of disarmament and in the promotion of peace and security. Such progress includes the early conclusion of negotiations on a draft international instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons; the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism; the growing number of countries concluding additional protocols with the International Atomic Energy Agency; the increasing support for the new Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War, the Mine-Ban Treaty; the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty; and the increasing number of countries that have either signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

A salient consensus reflected at the world summit deals with the interrelatedness of development, peace and human rights. In the same vein, the interrelationship between disarmament and development deserves particular attention because of the increasing resources poured into military expenditures despite the prevalence of poverty throughout the world. Additional financing for development can be obtained from cuts in military expenditures. Such cuts could facilitate the efforts of developed countries to reach the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance.

The Philippines associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Concerning the ASEAN statement, my delegation wishes to invite attention again to the decision of the

ministerial meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum, welcoming the initiatives of the Philippines and Indonesia to promote interfaith dialogue to enhance mutual trust and understanding among peoples for durable peace and security.

Mr. Manis (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to extend to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations and appreciation on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. I am confident that with your skill and experience you will capably guide our deliberations on disarmament and international security issues to a successful outcome. I wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success. I also wish to thank your predecessor, along with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the other members of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, for their great efforts in developing multilateral mechanisms for international cooperation in the field of disarmament for the maintenance of international peace and security.

At a time when good news is scarce, I am pleased to congratulate the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBareidi, on receiving this year's Nobel Prize for Peace.

My delegation supports the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Today, we are meeting to discuss matters of international security and disarmament, at a time of numerous international and regional differences on arms-related issues. This demonstrates that the only way to consolidate international security is to activate multilateral channels with a view to decisively grappling with the dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear weapons in particular, so that we do not further upset the balance of power between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is regrettable that the sixtieth session of the General Assembly comes at a time when the international community is unable to reach consensus on disarmament issues. The rigid positions on disarmament sections for this year's summit outcome did not emerge from a vacuum. Rather, they resulted from a series of setbacks that have been plaguing multilateral disarmament endeavours since the Final Document of the first special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978. Beginning with the failure in the Disarmament Commission and ending with that of the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held last May here at the United Nations, no substantive document commensurate with the aspirations of Member States has been agreed upon. Although some States have taken unilateral and bilateral initiatives to reduce their arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons, other major Powers are continuing to develop their chemical, nuclear and biological technological capabilities and are competing to conduct tests on the pretext of deterrence and national security, despite the existence of numerous protocols, instruments and conventions calling for the prohibition of such practices. Many States are concerned about the selectivity and lack of fairness that is evident with regard to disarmament issues. Others question the ability of such instruments to be globally and effectively enforced. The degree to which such conventions are useful depends not on how many of them there are or on the number of States that have acceded to them, but on whether they are applied in a comprehensive and just manner.

Conflicts, wars and hotbeds of tension in various parts of the world mean that some countries are living in a state of defence preparedness, as clearly reflected in the increasing military expenditure of some States. By contrast, contributions in the context of the Millennium Development Goals for pressing needs such as poverty, natural disasters and the environment are very modest and are even being reduced. Therein lies the paradox: the criteria are unworkable. We emphasize the need for the nuclear-weapon States to make a serious attempt to reduce their spending on weapons programmes with a view to phasing out and eliminating their nuclear and strategic arsenals. Measures designed to develop internationally binding instruments should provide protection and guarantees to those States that do not possess such technology. That should not derogate from the right of any State to engage in nuclear research for peaceful purposes.

As Under-Secretary-General Abe told the Committee, there is a pressing international need for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. We believe that would be the best way to foster nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, thereby entrenching the pillars of international and regional peace and security. As

members of the Committee know, security is indivisible. It is true that numerous States have signed or ratified treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. The signatories of such conventions represent 50 per cent of the world's countries. However, there are many regions of the world in which tensions run high, and which need nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly the Middle East region. Such a zone could have been established in that region had it not been for Israel's continued refusal to subject its facilities to the international safeguards regime, thus genuinely threatening security and stability in that region of tension, as well as in the rest of the world.

We pay tribute to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for its courageous initiative to voluntarily eliminate its programmes in that respect. The Sudan is a real partner in international efforts to achieve disarmament. In addition to acceding to numerous relevant international instruments and conventions, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), last year we signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), after taking part in a workshop held in Vienna on the objectives of the CTBT Organization and its work throughout the world.

In 2003, my country hosted the first Conference of the African National Authorities of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Conference adopted numerous important recommendations emphasizing the need to declare Africa a chemical-weapon-free zone, and the need for States to use nuclear technology for peaceful uses. In addition, my country was one of the first to sign and ratify the Ottawa Treaty on landmines.

We are playing a role in various areas of disarmament at the international and regional levels. We believe that, both regionally and internationally, multilateral action helps to ensure the universality of conventions and treaties and to enforce them.

A disarmament matter of high priority for us is the issue of small arms and light weapons. The Sudan has suffered more than most from that scourge, which has fanned the flames of internal strife. As everyone knows, some African tribes consider the possession of weapons as an integral part of the rights of the tribe and an expression of its power vis-a-vis other tribes. There can be no doubt that this makes the elimination or control of such weapons more difficult. The Sudan is more aware than most of the need to decisively combat this phenomenon. We have therefore been working actively in all regional and international forums with a view to curbing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We stress the need for an international mechanism for weapons-producing countries to mark and trace such weapons. My country is making great efforts nationally to curb small arms and light weapons.

At the beginning of this year, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed, putting an end to a war that had continued in my country for more than 20 years. The Sudan, as a State that is moving from war to peace, calls for the enforcement of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes. As the Committee knows well, the components of these programmes are interrelated, and any national efforts in that regard warrant regional and international support.

The Sudan is part of the Horn of Africa, an area of high tension and conflict. It is also part of the Great Lakes region, where small arms and light weapons are spreading and are intertwined with more complex issues. The Sudan is therefore paying particular attention to DDR and is looking forward to receiving international and regional support, in particular with regard to the relevant technical aspects.

Our deliberations at this current session must be different from those of the past, given recent developments with regard to armaments and real fears that terrorist groups might acquire weapons of mass destruction. The Committee thus has an even greater responsibility this year. The disarmament stalemate should not be allowed to continue. The world must be made secure from all threats so that we can focus all of our efforts on peace, stability, reconstruction, sustainable development and prosperity for mankind, not on the machinery of war and destruction.

Mr. Vila Coma (Andorra) (spoke in Spanish): I should like, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee.

One the most important events in the one-year history of the United Nations has concluded and the deliberations of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session are now under way. The High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, in which the majority of world leaders participated, adopted a document (resolution 60/1) whose provisions offer real

solutions to problems facing the international community.

The summit culminated in the adoption of that document, which represents great progress in the areas of disarmament, security and human rights. Beyond the political statements in those areas, the document is clearly truncated in one of the most important areas related to peace. I am speaking of the omission of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

The alarm sounded by the total absence of such recommendations is no accident. It is the result of an international climate where the ghosts of yesteryear, of the notion of guaranteeing peace through the fear of confrontation, have once again come to haunt us, as reflected in the breakdown of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the lethargy of the Disarmament Commission.

As it marks the sixtieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the international community could have made recompense for what was one of the greatest cataclysms in the history of humankind, by once and for all buttressing the foundations for the global eradication of the use of atomic energy for weapons purposes.

Threats to international peace and security are ever more obvious, given the steady proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In the face of this threat, the international community must raise its voice and turn those policies around, promoting instead the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and demanding the total and irreversible destruction of weapons arsenals.

Andorra supports action and measures taken by the United Nations in connection with the trade in weapons of all kinds and places on record its complete agreement with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in order to preserve international peace and security.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): Mr. Chairman, let me congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. You embrace the challenging task of energizing the work of the First Committee. It is my sincere wish, Sir, that, under your leadership, this Committee will achieve positive and fruitful results.

My delegation would like to express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the terrorist attack in Bali, as well as to the Government and the people of Indonesia.

We share with other countries the sense of frustration that the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to produce a consensus document on substantive issues and that all mention of disarmament and non-proliferation was omitted from the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). Moreover, existing conventions are not always implemented as they should be, and the ratification of the new ones, unfortunately, is not moving ahead with the speed for which we had hoped.

The people and the Government of San Marino, a country that has lived in peace for 700 years without an army, believe strongly that the greatest weapon that any civilization can have is the power of reason. I believe that all of us in this room have something in common: we share a fear that the terrorists will one day successfully use weapons of mass destruction. The only question is where and when.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Terrorism is a cancer not easy to eradicate. Therefore, today more than ever, it is imperative to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction without delay. It is unfortunate that this process is moving slowly due to lingering distrust among some Governments, coupled with the difficulty of international organizations providing accurate monitoring.

We, like many other countries that do not have weapons of mass destruction, have to put our lives and our future in the hands of others. Moreover, for a small country like ours, one single terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction could destroy the entire population.

We believe that one of the most important tasks is to inform and educate civil society at large about the dangers of our time, especially in those countries where the leaders act aggressively. In fact, it is my belief that a country's own citizens can be the most effective negotiators with their Government and that, if properly informed about the potential catastrophic outcome of the use of weapons of mass destruction, they will take a stand with their leaders to preserve their own lives, as well as their children's.

Mr. Levanon (Israel): Since this is the first time I am participating in the work of the First Committee, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and to express my delegation's full support for the important work being done by the Committee you chair. The issues at stake are important and need to be addressed with clarity.

For the past few years, the world of disarmament has stagnated, due to the inability of the parties to agree on a common agenda, on how to face the different challenges we face and on the priorities for our work. The stalemate we are witnessing in the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission is a clear reflection of the situation in the world of disarmament. The very recent inability to agree on language dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation for the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) underlines this stalemate all too well.

These forums do not operate in a vacuum. The objective we seek in disarmament is to tackle threats to global security and find solutions to existing challenges. If we leave behind us our obstinacy in dealing with outdated or irrelevant issues and if we abandon the obstructive all-or-nothing approach that has become the norm, and come to realize that we need indeed a pragmatic and realistic approach, then substantive work in the various forums will restart.

I would like to enumerate the threats and challenges we are facing today. The first challenge is that of further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), their means of delivery and their technology by States and non-State actors. The second is the irresponsible behaviour of States, their non-compliance with the obligations they took on when adhering to the various regimes and the clandestine WMD projects disguised by those States as civilian projects. The third is terrorism in all its aspects. Here, it is not only the phenomenon that represents the threat but also its possible connection with weapons of mass destruction. The fourth challenge is the intentional use of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and other types of weapons capable of causing large-scale casualties to civilians, and the accumulation of small arms and light weapons, ammunition, explosives and short-range rockets.

Today, words can be as deadly as weapons. The continuous incitement to violence and hatred by State, secular and religious leaders, as well as the repeated use of language threatening the very existence of States, can be just as destabilizing a factor as certain types of weapons.

The perception of certain concepts needs to be adjusted. The international community needs to choose the appropriate tools to achieve its objective of strengthening global stability, peace and security. When disarmament is appropriate and relevant, then it should be the chosen tool. When the reality is such that disarmament becomes irrelevant — for example, in cases of conflict or existential threats — other instruments need to be considered. Given the current state of affairs and the challenges we face today, we are of the view that substantial weight should be given to non-proliferation efforts, on the basis of a policy of results-oriented diplomacy, with close cooperation on both bilateral and multilateral levels. Moreover, the conceptual and traditional association between progress in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation has become irrelevant. These are two issues differing in their nature that need to be conceptually and practically de-linked. The international community needs to strengthen the steps taken in the field of non-proliferation without seeking to link it to progress, or to a lack of progress, in the field of disarmament. Obviously, total and global disarmament, starting with peace between neighbours and good neighbourliness, remains an important goal.

The conceptual separation between fuel cycle technology for military purposes and the technology for civilian purposes needs to be reviewed. Developments in recent years have made it clear that the meantime proliferation of fuel cycle technologies could be diverted towards the development of military programmes. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that States acting in bad faith are prevented from exploiting the loopholes that exist in current international regimes and norms. By doing so, these States hamper members of the international community in enjoying their right to peaceful nuclear energy. On issues concerning the fuel cycle, as we have clearly witnessed in recent years, the right to benefit from nuclear technology for peaceful purposes — granted under article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — has been misused by some countries, primarily Iran, in their efforts to develop clandestine military nuclear programmes.

It has emerged that, notwithstanding its importance and advantages, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards regime does not

provide a sufficient basis for uncovering clandestine nuclear programmes and facilities. It has also transpired that the technology, know-how and equipment needed to develop military nuclear programmes — in particular dual-use technologies in the field of the fuel cycle, and specifically uranium enrichment — have become much more accessible. The revelation of the existence of the Khan black market and proliferation networks — through which equipment, technology, whole facilities and even blueprints for weapons have been transferred — has shown that we are no longer facing only a small group of countries of concern in their export behaviour, but also, of increasing importance, non-State actors.

We are of the view that the traditional mechanisms of non-proliferation, important as they are, have proven to be insufficient to deal with current challenges. It is therefore our belief that new arrangements and tools need to be developed in order to complement those mechanisms and to address the real challenges.

As for terrorism, this year that ugly scourge struck again on many occasions and has caused thousands of casualties among innocent civilians. It is obvious that the establishment of a linkage between terrorism and WMD is only a question of time. Terrorist groups that acquire the technological capability to develop any type of WMD will use it. That dangerous threat, combined with the continuing trend of suicide terrorism that has hit lately — not only in our part of the word but also in London, in Sharm el-Sheikh, in Bali and elsewhere — have the potential to significantly disrupt security and stability of all, at every level — individual, global and regional. We therefore welcome Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), as it has been significant in advancing the joint struggle against WMD terrorism.

The attempt by some parties to grant a certain level of legitimacy to terrorist organizations and to tolerate the use of certain types of weapons by non-State actors is dangerous and inadmissible. No non-State actor should be allowed to obtain weapons such as landmines or MANPADS. Israel, for its part, has recently taken concrete measures in that regard. It decided to extend its moratorium on the export of any anti-personnel mines and undertook to adhere to the Wassenaar Arrangement guidelines on MANPADS.

Terrorism cannot exist in a vacuum: terrorist organizations are supported and financed by States. Therefore, the international community must take action to curb the flow of resources and arms to terrorist groups and their sponsors.

Regarding MANPADS, in our view, equal determination should be attached to the efforts undertaken by the international community to prevent terrorists and other non-State actors from acquiring and using MANPADS, very short range rockets and other types of missiles. Last year, for the first time this forum adopted a draft resolution, adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 59/90, providing guidelines for States to help prevent the unauthorized proliferation of MANPADS. I emphasize the importance of that resolution, and would like to see more steps taken to deal with this issue in a concrete and efficient way.

Concerning export controls, Israel supports and participates in international efforts to identify concrete and effective steps against the proliferation of WMD. We believe that cooperation between States in that regard should be increased and significantly strengthened. Consequently, Israel stresses the importance of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level by all members of the international community. In that regard, Israel has also expressed its support for the Proliferation Security Initiative and other export regimes such as the Megaport Initiative and the Container Security Initiative, and it will continue to do so in the future. We are of the view that tight export control regimes are crucial instruments in the efforts of States to prevent both State and non-State actors from acquiring WMD-related material. My country fully associates itself with the efforts made by the different export control regimes to address the challenges I have just described. Notwithstanding the significance of bilateral and multilateral efforts to confront these threats, this needs to be done primarily at the national level, since each State is responsible and accountable for its own actions.

For its part, Israel adopted last year an export and import control order designed to consolidate and further regulate control over exports of a chemical, biological and nuclear nature. That order includes a catch-all provision prohibiting the export of materials and items designated for WMD and establishes licensing requirements for sensitive items based on the

lists of the Australia Group and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. By that action, in addition to its unilateral adherence to the Missile Technology Control Regime guidelines since 1991, Israel is, de facto, in compliance with the different export control regimes.

Our part of the world continues to be characterized by clear and vigorous hostility towards Israel, in which violence and terrorism are unfortunately still part of daily life.

The international community has devoted much of its attention to addressing the threats related to weapons of mass destruction. It is only in the recent past that the threat of the illicit spread of conventional arms has been taken up more seriously. Conventional arms, in particular in unauthorized hands, are increasing human suffering in many parts of the world.

There are several principles that guide Israel in addressing the issue of conventional arms. First, arms as such do not pose threats, as aptly phrased many years ago in the saying, "A sword never kills anybody; it is a tool in the killer's hand". The poisonous combination of extensive armaments and hostile intentions is the genuine threat.

Secondly, armaments are in many cases a legitimate response to a given situation in which States are compelled to defend and secure their territory and population. Building confidence in a region will reduce the need for arms. When nations live together in a spirit of peace and good-neighbourliness, it will be possible to reduce armaments and increase transparency.

Thirdly, arms must be controlled and restraint must be exercised by every State in order to prevent unnecessary human suffering and loss of human life.

The uncontrolled spread of conventional weapons and their acquisition by terrorist or criminal elements invariably result in the loss of life. It is for this reason that my Government views the irresponsible use and transfer of conventional arms as a serious threat to regional and global security and stability.

Though we note substantive progress in the field of conventional arms control, there is yet no place for complacency in that regard. The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects has made a significant breakthrough that has demonstrated the political determination needed to address the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We, however, continue to believe that the lack of a clear call to prevent terrorists and other unauthorized entities from acquiring these weapons is one of its shortcomings. Nevertheless, the Programme of Action constitutes a good basis for addressing the phenomenon of illicit small arms and light weapons. Israel welcomes the positive outcome of the work of the Open-ended Working Group that has negotiated a new draft instrument on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. Implementation of the new draft instrument and of the Programme of Action would contribute to reducing human suffering if implemented by all States. We are looking forward to the review conference of the Programme of Action to be held next July here in New York.

We hope the disengagement plan from Gaza that we have just carried out will alter for the better the security environment and significantly reduce the existential threats Israel is facing today. We expect the Palestinian Authority to implement its commitment to collect small arms and light weapons from terrorist organizations, thus barring terrorists from obtaining small arms and light weapons and munitions as well as denying them financial and other resources with which to acquire them. For Israel — as well as for other States in our region and for the international community — the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action has become even more relevant. This situation presents an opportunity for implementing the provisions set out in the Programme of Action. We consider this as a fundamental and crucial step for progress in the peace process.

At present, some neighbouring countries and other countries in our region have resolved to develop weapons of mass destruction, thus ignoring their legal obligations and supporting terrorist organizations. The combination of these acts, together with public threats to the very existence of the State of Israel, is moving our region away from the vision of peace and security.

The Middle East needs a restructured security architecture built on the foundation of cooperation in the field of security, whereby each State will be reassured of the safety of its population and its peaceful existence, allowing the development of normalized relations and bringing prosperity to all.

We can start with confidence-building measures, enhancing trust and strengthening security, measures that will create the conditions for sustainable peace and stability, ease tensions and enable us to confront together the new threats to the region. Reducing threats to regional security will pave the way for a reduction in arms accumulation and the arms race in all its aspects, thus giving the economic, education and social components of national security the leading role they deserve.

Regarding the WMD-free zone, it is well known that Israel supports the eventual establishment of a mutually and effectively verifiable zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery. The establishment of such a zone should be based on arrangements freely arrived at by all the States of the region.

Israel believes that the political realities in the Middle East mandate a practical step-by-step approach. This process should begin with modest confidence-building measures followed by the establishment of peaceful relations, reconciliation and good-neighbourliness, which could possibly be complemented by conventional and non-conventional arms control measures. This process could eventually lead to more ambitious goals such as the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

This objective can be reached only as the result of direct dialogue between all States of the region. Artificial or imposed measures whose goal is to reduce Israel's capacity to defend itself cannot help in establishing trust, security and peace in the region.

In conclusion, we feel that it is the duty of this forum to find consensus that will be achievable, realistic and practical and that will eventually address the actual challenges to international peace and security. If we are to improve human security meaningfully and make sustainable development possible, we should adopt an approach that will enable us to engage seriously in finding a solution. Trying to circumvent consensus will only jeopardize the integrity of our work and may hinder the attainment of the important task with which we have been entrusted.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I wish first of all to join other delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

It still remains an urgent challenge today to prevent a nuclear arms race and realize a nuclear-free world through the nuclear disarmament process. Although it has been over 10 years since the end of the cold war, resort to nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States has not decreased, but rather it has increased. The doctrine of a nuclear pre-emptive strike is openly preached to render nuclear deterrence obsolete, and the development of new types of nuclear weapons and their qualitative improvement are rapidly being pursued.

As long as there are attempts to retain a permanent monopoly of nuclear weapons and dominate the world with their help, we cannot think of disarmament, peace and security at all. We must make a cool-headed analysis of the reality of the situation and present a correct solution in order to achieve practical disarmament and safeguard durable global peace.

With regard to the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction so often addressed by certain countries, it is none other than the threat of existing nuclear weapons that has caused this proliferation. Therefore, if we are to achieve non-proliferation, our first and most important task must be to completely destroy nuclear weapons, the cause of global proliferation, as soon as possible.

Nuclear disarmament is the best way to stop proliferation. Without nuclear disarmament, there will be no non-proliferation whatsoever. If the international community truly wants the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and does not want existing disarmament regimes to be destroyed or weakened, it should question the nuclear — threat policy of the nuclear super-Power — the cause of weapons proliferation — and take practical steps to remove these weapons. Nuclear-weapon States must abandon their nuclear doctrines based on the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons, commitment themselves not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances and come to the table to discuss the relevant international agreements.

To insist exclusively on non-proliferation while turning away from assurances of the non-use of nuclear weapons is to hide from reality. Assurances of the non-use of nuclear weapons are important for the survival

of non-nuclear-weapon States and for the promotion of the global nuclear disarmament process. Non-nuclear-weapon States demand unconditional assurances from nuclear-weapon States that they will not use nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

Today, some countries choose to strengthen their self-defence capabilities because they believe that none of the existing arms control regimes, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), can ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. If we connive in or tolerate the gangster-like logic that only big countries can possess nuclear weapons in order to threaten or attack small countries, then essential changes will take place in the international order that will surely push non-nuclear-weapon States towards acquiring nuclear deterrence.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a small country that is under constant threat from the super-Power, the United States. We could not but take the road of nuclear deterrence, because of the nuclear threats of the United States, which are based on its policy of deep-rooted hostility towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the past half a century.

Our nuclear weapons are not intended to threaten or strike others. We have no intention to keep them permanently. There will be no need for us to keep a single nuclear weapon if the relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are normalized, if bilateral confidence is built and if we are no longer exposed to the United States nuclear threat.

During the recent fourth round of the six-party talks, held in Beijing, we approached the discussions seriously, with magnanimity and a principled, fair and above-board position aimed at achieving our consistent and ultimate goal of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula by any means, thus enabling the talks to lead to an agreement on the principles to that end within a broad framework and overcoming all the challenges. The Joint Statement reflects our principled position concerning the resolution of the nuclear issue and, at the same time, clearly specifies the obligations of the United States and South Korea — the responsible parties with respect to the denuclearization of the whole Korean peninsula. What is most essential at this stage is that the United States provide light-water reactors to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as soon as possible, as evidence that it is removing nuclear threats against us and recognizing our rights to engage in peaceful nuclear activities.

Our firm and ultimate objective is the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and our consistent position is that the nuclear issue must be resolved peacefully through dialogue and negotiation. However, denuclearization cannot be achieved solely through our unilateral abandonment of our nuclear-weapon programme. The most urgent requirement for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is an immediate end to the nuclear threat of the United States and its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, aimed at overthrowing the regime. The United States should take decisive practical steps to remove the last legacy of the cold war on the Korean peninsula.

Today, it is necessary to turn the unstable armistice into a system aimed at a system for lasting peace and to abolish the last remnants of the cold war on the Korean peninsula with a view to the peace and reunification of Korea as well as the peace and security of North-East Asia and of the rest of the world. If the armistice system is transformed into a system for peace on the Korean peninsula, then the hostile policy and nuclear threat of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — the root cause of the nuclear issue — will vanish, which will naturally lead to the achievement of denuclearization.

Today, thanks to our independent policy and the Songun policy, the dangers of war are being prevented and peace is being maintained on the Korean peninsula and throughout the region. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will do all it can to remove external threats and to guarantee lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Kryzhanivsky (Ukraine): I would like to express my warmest congratulations to you, Ambassador Choi, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee. Please be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

The Ukrainian delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union presidency. In our statement, we would like to touch upon some additional issues that are of considerable importance to Ukraine.

Certain trends currently observed in the field of international security have had and will continue to have significant implications for the prospects of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. We strongly believe that effective multilateralism is more important than ever before. That should remain the basic principle for negotiations and for addressing concerns related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

In the light of the growing threat posed by terrorists, the efforts to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of their delivery systems have acquired particular importance. Collective steps should be taken to ensure the universality of existing international treaties in the sphere of non-proliferation and disarmament as well as strict compliance with their provisions.

Ukraine appreciates the Security Council's active involvement in addressing the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We support the objectives of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and believe that full implementation of its provisions will essentially reduce that threat. In that connection, I cannot fail to mention the progress made in activities within the framework of the Proliferation Security Initiative.

The establishment of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction is an important contribution to the enhancement of multilateral non-proliferation efforts. We appreciate the recently adopted decision concerning Ukraine's participation in the Partnership.

I have the privilege of drawing the attention of the Committee to the fact that last year marked the tenth anniversary of Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Ukraine has ensured the reduction of all of the nuclear weapons that it inherited from the former Soviet Union, thereby enhancing significantly the international non-proliferation regime and global security and creating favourable conditions for the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

As part of Ukraine's obligations under the START I Treaty, we still have to eliminate 5,000 tons of solid propellant from our SS-24 intercontinental ballistic missiles. Ukraine has created a State programme for the disposal of that significant amount of dangerous material. We appeal to the international community to find ways and means to provide additional financial assistance for that demilitarization project, which is considered to be an integral part of Ukraine's nuclear disarmament programme.

We deeply regret that 2005 NPT Review Conference was unable to reach a substantive outcome. Furthermore, States expected much from the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting in that regard, but again we witnessed failure. There are deep disagreements on basic approaches. Such trends are of particular concern for Ukraine. It is also a cause for regret that the well-thought-out and balanced initiative of Norway and other States aimed at promoting non-proliferation and disarmament, which we fully support, was not accepted by the high-level forum.

We would like to reiterate our support for the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and for the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Ukraine believes that legally-binding security assurances by the nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT will significantly strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime by eliminating plausible incentives for pursuing nuclear capabilities. In this connection, the reaffirmation by many States of their support for the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is encouraging.

Ukraine believes that International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards serve as an important tool for sustaining an environment in which nuclear energy can be used for peaceful purposes with no threat of proliferation. We strongly support the verification role of the IAEA. The universal adoption and faithful implementation of the strengthened safeguards system is a prerequisite for an effective and credible nuclear non-proliferation regime. As for Ukraine, the preparatory activities for the ratification of the Additional Protocol signed by Ukraine in 2000 have been completed, and ratification is expected very soon.

In the light of the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Ukraine continues to stress the vital importance of the Treaty's universalization. We call on all States, particularly those listed in annex II of the Treaty, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and unconditionally. Pending entry into force, we call on all States to abide by a

moratorium and to refrain from any action contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT.

The universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and ensuring its strict implementation should remain our priority in the field of chemical disarmament. We stress the importance of States possessors of chemical weapons complying fully with their obligations under the Convention. On 10 October this year, under the auspices of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and NATO, Ukraine will host a multinational exercise entitled Joint Assistance 2005. That joint endeavour will aim to enhance the national capacity of the States parties to the CWC to provide assistance and protection against chemical weapons, strengthening their ability to coordinate efforts and respond in a concerted fashion.

Ukraine fully supports the purposes of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and strictly complies with its obligations under that treaty. It is time to make decisive efforts to develop an appropriate verification mechanism for the BWC.

The gravity of the problem of small arms and light weapons is clearly illustrated by the fact that such weapons cause more than 90 per cent of all casualties in armed conflicts. As part of our efforts to fulfil the Programme of Action adopted at the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, Ukraine, with the assistance of the NATO Partnership for Peace Trust Fund, expects to destroy 1.5 million small arms and light weapons and 133,000 tons of surplus ammunition.

It is my pleasure to inform delegations that Ukraine ratified the Ottawa Convention in May this year. We are developing national legislation to ensure the effective implementation of our obligations under that document. Ukraine is fully committed to the goals of the Mine Ban Treaty.

Mr. Amolo (Kenya): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Bahemuka.

I would like to offer warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. You have Kenya's full support. Kenya associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Union.

I congratulate the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, on having won the Nobel Peace Prize.

We express heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia following the terrorist bomb attack last weekend in Bali. For us, it underscores two points. It conclusively illustrates that, first, such terrorist attacks can occur anywhere and affect everyone and that, secondly, the patent inability of the multilateral system to definitively address that and other disarmament-related matters will lead some to resort to unilateral measures, thus weakening the multilateral infrastructure, which we in Kenya wholeheartedly embrace and seek to replicate.

With multilateral solutions to disarmament issues obviously under stress, the inability of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) to point us to any meaningful direction on disarmament and non-proliferation matters was a major disappointment. If we add to that the Disarmament Commission's inability to hold any substantive meetings in 2005, the failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to reach agreement on any substantive issues last May, the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament — even in the attempt to agree an agenda — and the delay of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, it becomes clear that a disarmament diplomacy malaise is setting in, and new, carefully thought-out initiatives become even more attractive.

We can become more relevant, however, by revitalizing our work, reaffirming our raison d'être and thinking creatively about new solutions. In this regard, Kenya welcomes and joins the initiative by some Member States to re-energize disarmament diplomacy at the Conference on Disarmament by forming ad hoc working groups on various issues that would cease operations as soon as the Conference on Disarmament began its work. This approach would help. We believe that political will, carefully calibrated to produce the most desirable results for all, is a silver bullet, and that it will turn the tide. The status quo is not an option.

Our disappointment in the obvious lack of progress on some issues before this Committee cannot overshadow a growing sense of optimism that some

real progress has been made on the issue of small arms and light weapons. The positive progress we have seen in our region in confronting this problem, taken together with the international multilateral process that gave birth to a new draft instrument on marki nd tracing, are positive signs we should pursue. We proceed carefully, however, striving to bring delegations on board to achieve full consensus.

On 17 September 2005, just before the gener debate began, His Excellency President Mwai Kibai of the Republic of Kenya called on the Secretary-General to study the matter of negotiating a treaty on the arms trade. Other ideas have been floated, including requesting the General Assembly to authorize an intergovernmental group of experts to explore ways of codifying cooperation on the issue of the illicit sale of small arms and light weapons. We note that others support the position that minimum international controls on the transfer of small arms and light weapons and provisions on ammunition should be included in the United Nations Programme of Action and should be discussed at the Preparatory Committee meeting in January 2006 and the Review Conference in June 2006.

Whichever direction we take, let us not lose the momentum to consolidate real gains on this troublesome but malleable subject of disarmament. The Secretary-General's report (A/60/161) describes well the emerging consensus on this matter. Our efforts should propel this issue to fruition.

Our region is a trailblazer in combating the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons. We have moved from debate to the implementation of clear road maps, incorporating the twin principles of ownership and partnership. Since the First Biennial Meeting of States, in July 2003, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa have made significant achievements in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action. This has been carried out primarily through implementation of the Coordinated Agenda for Action on the Problem of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, adopted in November 2000; the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons; and the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.

The third Ministerial Review Conference of the Nairobi Declaration was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 20 to 21 June 2005. All 11 States parties signatories to the Nairobi Declaration and Nairobi Protocol were represented. The Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, though not a member, attended the Conference and was admitted as the twelfth member of that subregional initiative. The Conference approved the following documents: the Agreement on the Establishment of a Regional Centre on Small Arms to ordinate implementation of the Nairobi Declaration and Nairobi Protocol in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa, which will succeed the Nairobi Secretariat; the Ministerial Declaration on Practical Implementation of Small Arms Action in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa; and the Best Practice Guidelines and Minimum Common Standards on Key Issues in the Implementation of the Nairobi Protocol, including stockpile management; import, export and transit; and marking, tracing and brokering. We expect that these Best Practice Guidelines will be domesticated into the national legislation of member States by the end of April 2006.

Concerning capacity-building, the Regional Centre, with technical support from civil-society partners, has developed a training curriculum for law enforcement agencies, civil society and senior management. This training curriculum has been pre-tested in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, and has been found workable.

The Third Ministerial Review Conference of June 2005 welcomed the International Workshop on Global Principles for Arms Transfers held at Dar es Salaam in February 2005, the progress made towards creating consensus on the need for global principles for arms transfer controls and agreement on implementation of the Nairobi Protocol, which are consistent with the principles of the idea of an arms-trade treaty, which we support. In extolling the virtues of this successful regional effort, the solid external assistance it has received should be mentioned. We encourage more of the same. We look forward to the January 2006 meeting of the Preparatory Committee and the June 2006 Review Conference to deepen the normative environment on this importa t disarmament agenda.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, headquartered in Lomé, Togo, operates on the basis of voluntary contributions from Member States and some resources from the

Secretariat. We note with concern the Secretary-General's disquiet about the uncertainty of operations, owing to a constant drop in voluntary contributions. Although projects are being implemented, such as the Small Arms Transparency and Control Regime, it is clear that the Regional Centre's dire financial situation ought to be addressed more vigorously. Kenya encourages the Department for Disarmament Affairs to continue its efforts to identify ways of ensuring the Centre's operations, taking into account Africa's needs, as well as issues of efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The conclusions reached by the Secretary-General in his report of 22 July 2005 (A/60/153), need to be carefully implemented in order to enable the Centre to realize its mandate addressing Africa's needs in disarmament.

The First Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction was successfully held in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004. The resounding positive international expression of commitment by States parties in achieving the Convention's objectives marks another key success for disarmament diplomacy. We must make resolute efforts to ensure that the Nairobi Plan of Action is implemented to the fullest, realizing, finally, our vision of a totally mine-free world. The plight and the painful picture of our fellow human beings afflicted by these "weapons of small destruction" must come to an end.

Kenya signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism on 15 September 2005. Kenya's desire, along with that of the international community, to prevent terrorist acts using radioactive material, goes to the heart of this Committee's important agenda.

International terrorism remains one of the most serious challenges to global peace, security and stability. In this technological era, it has become imperative to ensure that weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear and radioactive material, do not end up in the possession of persons or groups intent on committing acts of terror. Kenya, therefore, welcomes the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and is among the countries that recently became signatories. Kenya is also party to 12 previously existing treaties on this subject and to the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. We hope consensus will be achieved on the outstanding issues in preparing a comprehensive convention on international terrorism in order to facilitate its conclusion during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Our task is huge. Our political will must be revived because the stakes are so high. This session must break the mould and propel us to reach real progress on disarmament.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Sir, allow me to add my voice to those of colleagues who preceded me in congratulating you wholeheartedly on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I wish you success and Godspeed in your endeavours. I would be remiss if I failed also to extend our congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur on their well deserved election. We are confident that under your leadership, and with the cooperation of the other members of the Bureau, the Committee's work will be crowned with success. Let me also take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his commendable efforts in the field of disarmament and for the comprehensive statement he delivered at the beginning of the general debate of the First Committee. We wish him every success.

We meet at a propitious time to affirm our resolve and interest in achieving peace and security for our peoples. As representatives of our peoples, Governments and countries, we are duty-bound to arrive at a consensus through which we can consolidate the pillars of international peace and security. Failure to arrive at a consensus on the items before the Committee would seriously jeopardize international peace and security. It would also allow the powerful — be they individual States or groups — to prevail, given the obvious lack of a real commitment to multilateralism and to the agreements and treaties governing the proliferation, production and threat of weapons.

We deplore the lack of a section dedicated to disarmament in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) adopted by heads of State or Government at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. It weakens the document, which does not live up to our expectations and goals. The Assembly lost an opportunity to reaffirm the commitments undertaken by nuclear-weapon States at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The failure to include a section on disarmament and non-proliferation in the outcome document did not occur in a vacuum. It was a consequence of the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, held recently in New York. At that Conference, the nuclear-weapon Powers were determined to forswear their commitments, and they declined to reaffirm the results of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences.

The failure of disarmament conferences, particularly in the field of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), presages dire consequences for humankind. We can only hope that those setbacks will prompt us to work more seriously to face up to those perils and not to treat them lightly.

The issue of regional security is one of the important challenges on the First Committee's agenda this year; we must reaffirm its importance and strive to enhance it. We believe that regional security can be achieved through confidence-building and through joint efforts among Governments and States.

The Middle East is one of the most volatile regions of the world; given the strategic imbalances prevailing there, the double standards and the race to acquire different types of nuclear and conventional weapons, it is a region set to explode. The fact that the international community has turned a blind eye to Israel's development of a nuclear arsenal, that it has failed to demand that Israel cease its nuclear activities, and, worse still, that it has cooperated openly or secretly with it, has created an imbalanced and abnormal situation which has prompted others to follow suit. That course of action has exacerbated the instability and tension in the region. It simply is not right to impose international sanctions on some States and exempt others from them. That approach lacks credibility since it fails to apply the same standards to all States. We therefore stress the importance of eliminating all types of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We demand that no exceptions be made to that rule and that no State be given preferential treatment over others.

The dangers posed by WMDs should not lead us to underestimate the gravity of the proliferation of conventional weapons, such as small arms and light weapons, and landmines. They too constitute a threat to international peace and security. Imagine what could happen if they fell into the hands of criminal gangs or terrorist groups when States failed and their institutions ceased to function. Here, my delegation would like to express its appreciation for the work done by the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We recognize the Group's importance and acknowledge the strenuous efforts it made to arrive at a draft international political instrument that will definitely help both to diminish sources of illicit small arms and light weapons, and to trace and identify them.

Governments need to work on the basis of the principle of confidence-building in order to put an end to the arms race. Lack of confidence in and fear of others has long prompted States to rush to acquire the most sophisticated and lethal weapons. My delegation therefore believes that the best way to control the arms race is to work on resolving the protracted political problems that have been left to fester in the world, and to convince parties to conflicts to turn to dialogue and to speedily settle their differences by political means before the situation becomes exacerbated.

Mr. Kapoma (Zambia): My delegation would like to offer you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau, our congratulations on your election to oversee the work of the First Committee. My sincere appreciation also goes to your predecessor, Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba of Mexico, who presided over the First Committee during the fifty-ninth session.

Allow me at the outset to sincerely convey the condolences of my Government to the Government and the people of Indonesia on the loss of life and property at the hands of international terrorists, who planned and carried out an inhuman suicide attack in Bali on 2 October 2005. The people of Indonesia, and Bali in particular, have hardly recovered from the 2002 terrorist attack and therefore need the support of the international community. Zambia shares their sorrow and sense of loss.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, by Nigeria on behalf of the African Union and by Botswana on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

In his opening remarks before this Committee, on Monday, 3 October 2005, Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs,

summed up the current situation correctly when he said, "We meet at a particularly difficult and challenging moment for disarmament and non-proliferation. It is a time of heightened global anxiety about weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons" (*A/C.1/60/PV.2*).

I share the view of the Under-Secretary-General that it is the responsibility of the First Committee to use this session to promote and strengthen the various multilateral efforts to eliminate the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction to international peace and security.

My delegation shares the concern over the lack of progress in the multilateral disarmament machinery. For the eighth year going, the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and, recently, the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to achieve progress on their substantive agenda items. In addition, the final document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly did not include provisions for disarmament and non-proliferation. That inexcusable development poses a great danger to the current, highly charged international security structure.

My Government believes that the international community could break the impasse in disarmament negotiations with a strong recommitment to upholding multilateralism and working for multilaterally agreed solutions. It is therefore incumbent upon all experts on disarmament to recognize the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and non-proliferation. When there is little progress in general and complete disarmament, there is a corresponding likelihood of vertical proliferation. Hence, there is need for a careful balance between disarmament and non-proliferation.

Zambia reaffirms its support for disarmament and non-proliferation. As agreed by consensus in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, general and complete disarmament in all its aspects is essential to strengthening international peace and security. The NPT depends on a careful balance of three equally important pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful application of nuclear science by all States, without discrimination.

It is our belief that negotiations on nuclear disarmament, undertaken in good faith, would act as catalysts in reaching agreement on other weapons systems. In other ways, Zambia welcomes innovations that will strengthen the confidence-building measures that helped to secure important disarmament successes, such as the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles and the first and second round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in the last century.

There is a need to reduce the highly disproportionate threats posed by hostile regimes and fanatic groups through an enhanced confidence-building regime. In other words, as disarmament experts, let us go back to the drawing board and alter the current mindsets that have brought the international community to a stalemate in arms control and disarmament.

My Government is aware of the destructive nature of small arms and light weapons on the stability of regions and countries. In that regard, multilateral efforts in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will serve humanity well. The adoption of an internationally binding instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons is a welcome development. It is our hope that the 2006 small arms Review Conference will further strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Anti-personnel mines are silent killers and should continue to deserve the collective attention of the international community. In that regard, I wish to call upon all States, international organizations and civil society to seize the opportunity of the forthcoming Sixth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction to accelerate the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan. Working together, the international community can achieve the vision of a world free of anti-personnel mines.

Let me conclude by underscoring the fact that disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, is a key factor in enhancing international peace and security. Nuclear disarmament can trigger progress in other weapon systems, be they conventional, chemical, biological or bacteriological weapons.

Weapons of mass destruction can be effectively addressed by existing instruments in the field of disarmament. The proliferation of armaments, including nuclear arms, is a consequence of insecurity. A commitment to multilateralism by all States will effectively resolve, once and for all, the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Adamia (Georgia): At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that, under your capable guidance, we will be able to achieve significant results in our work.

Regarding non-proliferation and disarmament issues, which represent a pillar of international security and peace, we attach particular significance to the 2005 United Nations summit and the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is unfortunate that the NPT Review Conference concluded its work without being able to reach an agreement on a substantial final document. Let me express deep regret over the lack of concrete measures and recommendations in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation in the outcome document of the 2005 world summit.

As we are discussing disarmament and security, I would like to draw attention to aggressive separatism as a major threat to international peace and security. Specifically, I would like to remind the Committee about so-called white spots, the conflict zones in two secessionist regions of Georgia — Abkhazia and the former autonomous region of South Ossetia. Both of those regions are undergoing an increasingly aggressive process of militarization. Most cynically, the separatist enclaves are receiving military shipments from our neighbouring country, the Russian Federation, through checkpoints along the Abkhazian and South Ossetian segments of the Georgian-Russian border, controlled exclusively by Russian border guards. As a result, quite a substantial amount of arms and ammunition, which are not controlled by the State and consequently are not reflected in the records of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, has accumulated in those territories.

Just recently, on 20 September 2005, South Ossetian separatists held a celebration of so-called independence of the self-styled Republic of South Ossetia and a military parade. That event provided a display of military detachments and armoured vehicles, including self-propelled howitzers, tanks, armoured personnel carriers, armoured combat vehicles, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, and so on. We consider that to be a violation of all peace agreements related to the conflict, as well as of provisions and principles of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, a cornerstone of European security.

Despite the Russian Federation's commitment to playing the role of principal mediator in the settlement of the conflict in South Ossetia, it continues to arm separatists, thus providing a fertile ground for the illicit smuggling of arms, as well as for the proliferation of dangerous materials.

The very existence of separatist regimes that are basically backed by Russian military and State institutions gives terrorist groups an opportunity to acquire arms and ammunition. We would like once again to underline that the process of the uncontrolled spread of armaments in those lawless territories represents a major threat to the stability of the entire region, above all because of their use by terrorists.

Everybody remembers last year's terrorist attack in Beslan. It is obvious that that tragic event could not have happened if the terrorists had been stopped at the checkpoints they passed, unhindered and in great numbers, on their way to Beslan. The only reason they were not stopped and properly checked was their statement that they were heading to South Ossetia. That is a shining example of how supporting separatism has a boomerang effect and ultimately winds up supporting terrorism.

Another terrorist attack in the town of Gori, Georgia, was undertaken by criminals who had been trained and equipped in the former South Ossetia by Russian special services. We have every evidence to confirm that. Is it not clear that such behaviour is directed not only against my country, but above all against Russia itself?

One more point of major concern to us is the illegal presence of the Russian military base in Gudauta, on the conflict territory of Abkhazia, Georgia. The base was to have been disbanded and withdrawn as long ago as 2001. Despite the Istanbul commitments and the obligations undertaken by the Russian Federation under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the military base is still

operating without the consent of Georgia, providing arms and military expertise to the separatist regime.

In fact, what is happening in the secessionist regions of Georgia is nothing less than annexation, which is simply the assertion of effective control though political, economic and military means over the territory of another State.

Regrettably, those facts, as well as similar developments that continue to arise in the conflict zones on the territory of Georgia, are outside the national and international disarmament and non-proliferation control mechanisms. But they remain basic problems that this Committee should address.

In that regard, I would like to reaffirm the full readiness of Georgia to cooperate with the international organizations, the United Nations first and foremost, in elaborating and applying special mechanisms aimed at dealing with territories and regimes that are beyond the control of the State. Particular attention should be drawn to the supporters of those enclaves, be they States, administrative regions, governmental institutions or private organizations.

We have raised those problems in this forum a number of times during earlier debates. Time and again, we have repeated that the problems that we face cannot be solved on the basis of double standards. The provisions of international law and the standards of inter-State relations should not vary depending on the size and military might of a particular State. They must be universal. Only thus can we achieve the goal of security and stability worldwide, and that is the main task of this very Organization.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): Allow me first to join others in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and, through you, the Bureau. I assure you of my delegation's full support for the successful outcome of our work.

Now is the time to review developments in the field of disarmament over the past year. In that respect, an objective analysis of its inadequate outcome is paramount. During our discussions last year, we were hopeful that 2005, being rich in global events in the disarmament field, would be a memorable year that would help advance international peace and security even further. However, the year did not deliver to the full of our expectations. In looking back, we see lost opportunities that could have elevated our discussions to a qualitatively different level. The Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) did not produce any substantive outcome. Despite the tremendous effort behind the Disarmament Commission, we were unable to agree on an agenda that would have enabled us to bring that body of utmost importance out of stalemate. Disarmament and non-proliferation, being fundamental pillars of international peace and stability, were left out of the outcome document of the 2005 summit.

At the same time, my delegation takes this opportunity to thank the group of seven countries, under the leadership of Norway, for its initiative on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, of which Armenia was very supportive.

We would be remiss, however, in not mentioning the significant results that 2005 did register. The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism was adopted. Having signed that document at the world summit, Armenia demonstrated once again its unwavering adherence to the joint efforts of the international community in combating terrorism. Now we have to work on its full and universal implementation.

The outcome of the fourth round of the six-party talks on the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula just two weeks ago was also very encouraging.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) entered its implementation phase. Armenia has already presented its first report pursuant to the provisions of the resolution and is awaiting comments from the 1540 Committee.

We successfully concluded the negotiations over the international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. The instrument would become the next critical step in combating the illicit proliferation of those weapons, which pose a grave threat to millions of civilians in different parts of the world.

Once every session, Armenia reports to this body on the progress it has made in meeting its obligations under various international instruments in the field of disarmament. This year is no exception. Despite the fact that Armenia is not a signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production

Convention on Nuclear Safety. Once again, Armenia would like to reiterate its commitment to continuing its collaboration with the IAEA in a transparent and open manner.

Armenia hopes that, during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, we will be able to collectively rise to the challenges ahead and impel the disarmament machinery out of stalemate in order more effectively to address emerging global security threats, to the benefit of increased and improved peace and security in the world. Armenia stands ready to make its contribution to that effect.

Mr. Ba'Omar (Oman) (spoke in Arabic): At the outset, Sir, allow me to extend warmest congratulations on behalf of my delegation upon your election as Chairman of this important Committee. Your presence as Chairman is an asset that will ensure the success of the work of the Committee. Rest assured of our full cooperation so that we can achieve the desired outcome.

I wish to take this opportunity also to express our thanks and appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his continued efforts to develop the necessary mechanisms for international cooperation in the field of disarmament. This was clearly demonstrated through his invaluable statement to the Committee.

The sixtieth session of the General Assembly is meeting in a critical international situation. Our concerns in this Committee relate to the failure to achieve the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the failure to secure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The international community was also disappointed at the complete omission of disarmament issues from the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting held at the beginning of this session. The presence of such issues would have renewed the commitment of States, especially nuclear States, to the pledges they undertook during the Millennium Summit regarding disarmament issues.

My delegation is greatly concerned about the unstable security situation in the Middle East region, despite our considerable efforts to create an environment conducive to security and stability in the region by supporting all worthwhile efforts to eliminate all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). In

social and economic reintegration, so that Member States can live up to their obligations under the Convention.

Jordan was among the first to sign and ratify the Ottawa Convention. As a State party, we have taken effective steps to comply with its provisions. By March 2003, we had destroyed all our stockpiles of anti-personnel mines. It is our present hope that we may be able to satisfy our treaty obligations by May 2009. We are also currently playing an active role, together with our partners, in promoting the Ottawa Convention in our region and will continue to do so, as we attach great importance to achieving the universality of the Convention.

Jordan welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In line with our obligations under the resolution, we have submitted our reports on its implementation.

On the basis of our firm commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and of the need to address within the frameworks of the United Nations and through international cooperation consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law — the threat posed by terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons, Jordan welcomes the recent adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We also stress that one of the best safeguards and means for preventing weapons of mass destruction from reaching terrorist groups and non-State actors would be a comprehensive international convention on the issue. Moreover, it is important to recall that the most effective way to which to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction is to totally eliminate such weapons.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by assuring you of our full support and cooperation in bringing your work and the Committee's deliberations to a successful conclusion.

The Chairman: I should like to thank the representative of Jordan for her excellent editing of her statement in response to our appeal for brevity.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am sure that under your able chairmanship the Committee will have a successful session this year. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my felicitations to other members of the Bureau as well. Let me also associate my delegation with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

On the sixtieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the international community rightly expects progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects. However, the lack of progress towards achieving the total elimination of nuclear arsenals is a major source of international concern. The continuing existence of thousands of nuclear warheads in the stockpiles of nuclear-weapon States and the development of new types of nuclear weapons and of military doctrines for their use are threatening all of humanity more than ever before.

The failure of the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the exclusion of a disarmament section from the outcome document (resolution 60/1) of the High-level Plenary Meeting are setbacks for the 1978 goal of nuclear disarmament. The rejection of disarmament commitments, the resort to pre-emptive war in dealing with international issues, new military doctrines such as the 2002 Nuclear Posture Review, which lowers the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, plans to develop usable mini-nuclear weapons and, most recently, the 2005 Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations, which explicitly extends the doctrine of pre-emptive war to create nuclear arsenals — all of these are alarming signs for international peace and security.

The international community must not allow the taboo against the threat or use of nuclear weapons, established since 1945, to be broken. After the end of the cold war, significant progress was made in the areas of arms control and disarmament. The conclusion of the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and of the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the 1995 indefinite extension of the NPT, together with the decisions and commitments aimed at nuclear disarmament and the agreements reached at the 2000 NPT Review Conference — particularly the 13 practical steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons — promised a brighter future for disarmament and non-proliferation.

However, since 2000, hopes have been gradually fading. A policy emerged from the United States of

rejecting international commitments and resorting to unilateral actions, and that country began to withdraw from multilateral treaties one by one. We should not lose sight of the fact that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 were not the starting point. Indeed, the rejection of the CTBT, the blocking of the negotiations on the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Protocol, the withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, the imposition of a certain decision on the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and similar attitudes concerning other international issues, such as the opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, all took place before 11 September 2001. The tragic event of 11 September merely served to accelerate that unilateral policy, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 to pre-empt the so-called imminent threat of weapons of mass destruction was its climax.

Despite the sincere efforts and good intentions of a great majority of States parties from all corners of the world, the 2005 NPT Review Conference ended without result due to the policy of the same nuclear-weapon State. Just before the start of the NPT Conference, a high-ranking United States official announced that "Article VI [of the NPT] is just one sentence long". By that he meant to suggest that nuclear disarmament does not exist. He further argued that the unequivocal undertaking to achieve nuclear disarmament, made at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, belongs to the past.

That position was not only maintained throughout the Conference — and led it to failure — but also continued and extended through the negotiations on the General Assembly summit outcome document (resolution 60/1). In a position paper on the disarmament and non-proliferation section of the draft outcome document distributed by the United States delegation, all references to disarmament were deleted — except the title. That was a clear indication that the United States did not have the political will to reach an agreement on the disarmament section.

Furthermore, while 155 countries participated in the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in New York, the same nuclear-weapon State did not attend, owing to its ideological opposition to the CTBT. Meanwhile, it continues to work on plans to reduce the time necessary to resume nuclear tests and has allocated millions of dollars to that effort. Those actions seriously call into question that State's commitment to the moratorium on nuclear testing.

The actions and policies rigorously pursued by the United States without the slightest regard for the concerns of the rest of the international community clearly indicate what lies ahead if they remain unchecked. No wonder that country has been trying to throw up smokescreens at international forums: they are trying to deflect attention from their own record and actions by turning superficial concerns about the peaceful nuclear programmes of others into a politically charged debate.

While that nuclear-weapon State cries wolf over the risk of proliferation in cases involving peaceful nuclear activities of NPT member States whose facilities fall under full-scope IAEA safeguards, ironically it has itself concluded agreements for the transfer of all kinds of nuclear technology to non-parties to the NPT. In particular, I would mention its 2000 nuclear cooperation agreement with Israel — the only non-party to the NPT in the Middle East and one whose clandestine nuclear weapon facilities are in clear contravention of its own so-called non-proliferation strategy. By transferring nuclear-weapon technology to Israel and participating in other forms of nuclear sharing, the United States is not complying with its NPT obligations. These cases are clear evidence that the so-called proliferation concern over the peaceful nuclear activities of some countries is a mere pretext for pursuing political objectives and imposing a new nuclear apartheid.

The international community should firmly reject this discriminatory approach and should insist on the full implementation by States parties of all their commitments, particularly the unequivocal obligation of nuclear-weapon States to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The world community should take effective measures to prevent the development of new types of nuclear weapons, to stop nuclear sharing, to prohibit the threat of use of such inhumane weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and to renounce unlawful unilateral actions and policies.

Notwithstanding the failures in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, there has been some good progress on the CWC, on the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and on small arms and light weapons. The destruction of chemical

weapons stockpiles is continuing under international inspection, and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is functioning professionally. However, negotiations on issues such as how to implement article XI of the CWC need to be pursued more seriously. Discussion among States parties on ways and means to strengthen the BWC is also ongoing and the issue of a legally binding protocol is still on the table.

Perhaps one of the most promising items on the disarmament and arms control agenda has been the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Thanks to the leadership of Ambassador Thalmann of Switzerland and the flexibility shown by delegations, the Open-ended Working Group was able to finalize a draft international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. Although the final results were not completely satisfactory to all delegations, and despite the valid reservations made by some countries, the conclusion of a draft instrument should be considered a step forward in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Any sound legal instrument should strike a balance between rights and obligations; this can guarantee the longevity of the legal regime by providing incentives for membership and compliance. The provisions of international disarmament instruments such as the CWC, the NPT and the IAEA Statute that relate to the right to access to peaceful technology as well as the imperative of cooperation and sharing of that technology among those that have accepted obligations testify to the wisdom and understanding of the drafters of those instruments. In none of those instruments is the inalienable right of States parties to peaceful technologies limited to specific areas. For instance, while States parties to the CWC undertake not to divert peaceful technologies and materials to prohibited activities, they are permitted access to all kinds of technologies, even scheduled chemicals that can be agents or precursors for chemical weapons may be produced for peaceful applications, but under strict verification regimes. A thorough study of the history of NPT negotiations clearly shows that the drafters of the Treaty never intended to limit the inalienable rights of the NPT States parties. The NPT stipulates the IAEA safeguards as an objective guarantee of the non-diversion to prohibited activities.

There is no justification whatsoever to limit the inalienable rights of the NPT States parties to the peaceful nuclear activities, including the fuel cycle. As reaffirmed in this Committee by the representative of the Non-Aligned Movement, each country's choices and decisions involving the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected without jeopardizing its policies or international cooperation agreements and arrangements for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, or its fuel-cycle policies. There is only one condition in the Treaty, and that is verification through the IAEA safeguards.

There were some attempts in the past to monopolize advanced technologies through the establishment of non-transparent and exclusive clubs such as the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime. But developing countries are developing particularly in the scientific field, and no nation can be stopped from advancement and progress.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, continues to comply with its obligations and to cooperate with the competent international organizations, as it has done in the past. No politically motivated decisions by a block of countries can prevent Iran from exercising its legal and legitimate rights.

The Chairman: I now invite the Permanent Observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to take the floor.

Ms. Filip (Inter-Parliamentary Union): For the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and its 141 member parliaments, arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation are all matters of great concern. As such, they figure high on the overall agenda of the organization, with at least five related resolutions adopted at IPU statutory assemblies, as well as two sessions of the annual parliamentary hearings at the United Nations devoted to those issues over the past three years.

The IPU was created more than a century ago first and foremost to promote dialogue and build confidence among parliamentarians from all corners of the world in order to prevent or defuse conflicts. Multilateralism is thus deeply ingrained in our way of looking at the world and the challenges that it faces. We believe that, through dialogue, it is possible to

move from a culture of violent response to one of mutual understanding and cooperation. As the closest link between the people of the world and their respective Governments, parliaments not only have a unique perspective to bring to bear on all issues on the international agenda, but also unique responsibilities to ensure that international law is applied within national borders and that commitments taken abroad are duly implemented and translated into action at the national level.

As parliaments are called upon to ratify international treaties, and through their oversight function make sure that those are effectively implemented, it is of crucial importance that parliaments themselves be well informed of and involved in the deliberative and negotiating process under way. Only then can it be expected that parliaments will actively pursue the ratification of international instruments, their early entry into force and translation into national legislation.

From our perspective, there is growing political awareness of and commitment to that process, as formulated by the speakers of parliaments when they assembled recently here in New York for their second world conference. On that occasion, they made a strong call for global security issues to be tackled more vigorously at the United Nations. Nuclear-weapon States should meet their obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament, and States must make new efforts in all areas of non-proliferation and arms control. In turn, parliaments should monitor more closely the national implementation of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament instruments and related United Nations resolutions, and engage in an exchange of information on best practices for such monitoring.

I have been asked to be brief, so in the speech that is being distributed, representatives will find more information regarding the type of work that the IPU and its member parliaments is conducting as regards the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, as well as in the field of small arms and light weapons.

The IPU is also encouraging parliaments to adopt appropriate national legislation to control the export of armaments of all types, most particularly focusing on items relating to weapons of mass destruction. That is part of a broader process seeking to enhance the democratic oversight of the security sector, including through a series of handbooks and guides, as well as through national and regional workshops and seminars intended to further build parliamentary capacities.

Terrorism constitutes perhaps one of the most tangible threats to the security of many nations today. The prospect of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists may turn into reality if we do not act urgently to close legal loopholes and to take concrete regulatory and law enforcement action on the ground.

A resolution adopted this spring in Manila at the 112th IPU Assembly calls on parliaments that have not yet ratified the 12 multilateral treaties on terrorism and the relevant regional instruments to do so expeditiously and to proceed from there to incorporate the provisions of those treaties into domestic legislation. After the agreement reached this year on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the IPU looks forward to seeing negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism come to a successful conclusion this fall, pursuant to the commitment made in the 2005 world summit outcome document.

Like many in this room, our members are hopeful that a decision to convene an international conference for combating terrorism will be taken during this session of the General Assembly. They also share the view of many States Members of the United Nations that a precise definition of the nature and actual features of terrorism is indeed required. In that process, we are hopeful that the experience of the IPU in conducting intense political consultations and in actually identifying key elements of a definition of terrorism will be of assistance to the United Nations Member States.

As important as they are, international covenants do not represent an end in itself. To make peace or to keep the peace after the conclusion of hostilities, we need a more comprehensive assistance package for countries emerging from conflict, which would include training, monitoring, infrastructure and capacity-building for good governance. That is why we consider one of the greatest achievements of this year's world summit to be the constitution of a United Nations

peacebuilding commission. Parliaments play a key role in that transition process and serve as an important barometer of how healthy and sustainable post-conflict order really is. It is from that perspective that one of the upcoming sessions of the 2005 parliamentary hearing at the United Nations — to be held here at the end of this month — will be devoted to the mandate and working modalities of the future peacebuilding commission.

The IPU annual parliamentary hearing at the United Nations is an event that is attracting more and more interest from the international parliamentary community, as it provides an important opportunity for discussion and interaction on the main issues of the United Nations agenda, and we hope that many here will be able to join us on that occasion.

Finally, please allow me to conclude by recalling the action of the IPU as a strong advocate of gender parity in politics and decision-making, not only as a fundamental human right, but also as an effective way to bring about development and peace. We believe that women can bring a unique perspective to bear on all of those issues and make a decisive difference to their overall outcome. For the IPU, then, it is more than ever urgent to ensure that more women be included in all processes and forums promoting disarmament, arms control and international security. We look forward to the 27 October open debate in the Security Council on women and the promotion of peace as a significant opportunity to further mainstream that dimension into the work of the United Nations.

The Chairman: The Committee has heard the last speaker in the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items, and has thus concluded the first phase of its work on schedule. I thank all representatives for their cooperation.

Programme of work

The Chairman: In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the First Committee will embark on the second phase of its work — the thematic discussion on item subjects, as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under the disarmament and international security agenda items — starting Monday, 10 October.

As I explained previously, there will be no formal list of speakers for the second phase of our work. I would, however, suggest that delegations inform the Secretariat, to the extent possible, of their plans to speak prior to the specific meetings. Otherwise, requests for all interventions will be taken directly from the floor on the given day. I would also urge all delegations to focus their comments on the specific subject that is being discussed at each meeting. In that connection, I would like to remind everyone that Monday and Tuesday have been allocated for the subject of nuclear weapons.

Allow me also to remind all delegations again that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under all disarmament and international security agenda items is next Wednesday, 12 October, at 6 p.m. Delegations are strongly requested to submit their draft resolutions by the deadline in order to enable the Secretariat to make them available as official documents as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.